

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5774

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 00826

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR US FR

SUBJECT: GOF EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN COOPERATIVE POSTURE
TOWARD UNITED STATES

1. EMBASSY IS FORWARDING BY SEPTTEL HIGHLIGHTS OF ARTI-
CLE IN JANUARY 11 ISSUE OF LE MONDE ENTITLED "FRENCH
GOVERNMENT IS DEMONSTRATING MORE AND MORE ITS DESIRE FOR
CONCILIATION TOWARD THE UNITED STATES." I WAS PARTICU-
LARLY STRUCK BY THIS ARTICLE BECAUSE IT IS CONSISTENT
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WITH NUMBER OF IMPRESSIONS I HAVE OBTAINED HERE RECENTLY.

2. AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED (PARIS 231), FOREIGN MINISTER SAUVAGNARGUES WAS COMPLETELY UNDERSTANDING WHEN I CALLED ON HIM JANUARY 6 TO CLARIFY THE SECRETARY'S BUSINESS WEEK INTERVIEW. HIS ACCEPTANCE OF MY EXPLANATION ON THE EUROPEAN ASPECTS OF THE INTERVIEW WAS NOTEWORTHY IN VIEW OF THE SENSITIVE HISTORY OF THIS SUBJECT IN FRANCE. BUT EQUALLY INTERESTING WAS HIS RELAXED ATTITUDE TOWARD THE "MILITARY INTERVENTION" SECTIONS OF THE INTERVIEW AFTER THE PRONOUNCED NERVOUSNESS HE HAS SHOWN PREVIOUSLY ABOUT THIS SUBJECT.

3. YESTERDAY, SAUVAGNARGUES TESTIFIED BEFORE THE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. HERE AGAIN HE DEMONSTRATED FORCEFULLY THAT THE GOF IS NOT GOING TO BE DRAWN INTO ANY PUBLIC CRITICISM OF UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY. HE TURNED ASIDE COMMUNIST ATTEMPTS TO EXTRACT NEGATIVE COMMENTS ABOUT THE SECRETARY'S BUSINESS WEEK INTERVIEW AND CONCENTRATED INSTEAD ON THE SUCCESS OF THE MARTINIQUE SUMMIT IN RECONCILING US AND FRENCH VIEWS ON A PRODUCER-CONSUMER DIALOGUE AND CONSUMER SOLIDARITY. LAST WEDNESDAY, PRIME MINISTER CHIRAC CHARACTERIZED AS "RIDICULOUS" COMMUNIST PARTY LEADER MARCHAIS' CRITICISM OF THE GOF FOR REMAINING SILENT ABOUT THE BUSINESS WEEK INTERVIEW.

4. IN MY CONVERSATIONS WITH PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING, FOREIGN MINISTER SAUVAGNARGUES, SENATE PRESIDENT POHER AND OTHER TOP OFFICIALS, IT HAS BEEN MADE CLEAR TO ME SINCE MARTINIQUE THAT THE GOF IS MAKING A POSITIVE EFFORT TO AVOID FRICTION AND WISHES TO CARRY OUT BILATERAL RELATIONS IN A GROWING SPIRIT OF COOPERATION AND FRIENDSHIP. THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE ISSUE WITH US PRIVATELY WHEN THEY BELIEVE THEIR NATIONAL INTEREST OR PRESTIGE IS IN QUESTION. BUT IT IS CLEAR THAT THE GOF HAS NO INTENTION FOR THE TIME BEING OF ENGAGING IN PUBLIC POLEMICS WITH THE UNITED STATES.

5. COMMENT: WHILE THE GOF IS SINCERELY TRYING TO IMPROVE THE CLIMATE OF US-FRENCH RELATIONS, LE MONDE'S AR-
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TICLE DESCRIBING THIS PHENOMENON WAS NOT PUBLISHED OUT OF FRIENDLY MOTIVATION. AS EMMANUEL DE MARGERIE, FORMER QUAI DIRECTOR FOR EUROPE, COMMENTED TODAY, THE ARTICLE IS PART OF AN ORCHESTRATED ATTEMPT BY GISCARD'S ENEMIES TO PORTRAY HIM AS SLIPPING RAPIDLY DOWN THE SLOPE OF ATLANTICISM. IT IS IMPORTANT, THEREFORE, THAT THE USG AVOID PUBLIC COMMENT ON THIS PHENOMENON. HOWEVER, WE SHOULD GIVE IT CONSIDERABLE WEIGHT IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS

WITH GOF OFFICIALS.
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